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SUBJECT: PORTUGAL REQUESTS SUPPORT FOR HRC CANDIDACY:
MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR BOLTON

REF: USUN 624

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, U.S. Permanent Representative
to the United Nations, for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

(C) 1. SUMMARY: Ambassador Bolton met April 11 with Portugal's PermRep Ambassador Joao Salguiero, who requested U.S. support for Portugal's candidacy to the Human Rights Council (HRC). Regarding the existing announced candidacies for the HRC, Salguiero said that he did not anticipate that any of the existing WEOG candidates would withdraw, and with regard to other regions' candidacies, he noted Portugal's general position that it is important to have "good examples" on the Council, "not more of the same." Regarding the African slate, he said he believes the African Group intended to present a clean slate, and he believes there is "no room" on it now for Sudan or Zimbabwe. Ambassador Bolton raised Iran with Salguiero, expressing concern with Iran's April 11 announcement that it had attained a higher level of enrichment capability. Salguiero said the EU General Affairs Council had met on Monday and Tuesday, and he would try to obtain a report of the meeting regarding Iran and share this with Ambassador Bolton. END SUMMARY.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND PORTUGAL'S CANDIDACY

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador Bolton met April 11 with Portugal's PermRep Ambassador Joao Salguiero, at the latter's request, to discuss Portugal's candidacy to the Human Rights Council (HRC). (Note: Portugal is one of nine current declared candidates for seven WEOG seats on the Council. End Note.) Salguiero requested U.S. support for the candidacy, citing six key reasons. Among his arguments in favor of Portugal's candidacy, Salguiero noted that Portugal will serve as EU President after Finland and Germany, and that Portugal will also serve as President/Chair of the Community of Democracies from 2007-2009. Salguiero argued that it is important for the EU President and the CD chair to be a member of the HRC (rather than an observer) in order to play the most positive and productive role possible. Salguiero also cited strong bilateral relations with the United States (noting also that Portugal had stepped back from previous candidacies in favor of the United States and is generally selective in which candidacies it presents), and Portugal's good dialogue with members of the African Group, which will also play an important role in the new Council. He said that Portugal is the only country from "southwest Europe" running for the Council (although he recognized that there are seven EU countries which have declared their candidacies). Finally, he pointed to Portugal's strong record on human rights issues and shared a copy of Portugal's pledges and commitments in relation to its candidacy. He noted that similar points on Portugal's candidacy had been delivered to the Department in Washington.

13. (C) Ambassador Bolton expressed appreciation for Salguiero's points and noted Portugal's strong qualifications for the HRC. Referring to Secretary Rice's statements that the United States will work to get the best candidates possible elected to the Council, the Ambassador asked for Salguiero's thoughts on the upcoming election and existing candidacies and slates. Salguiero said that he did not anticipate that any of the existing WEOG candidates would withdraw; Ambassador Bolton suggested that in the future it might be beneficial for WEOG members to consider presenting a clean slate, rather than campaigning against each other and having some members trade votes with less than optimal candidate countries. Salguiero agreed that countries should be careful regarding vote trading for the HRC, and he noted Portugal's general position that it is important to have "good examples" on the Council, "not more of the same." Regarding the African slate, he said he believes the African Group intended to present a clean slate, and he believes there is "no room" on it now for Sudan or Zimbabwe. (Note: In addition to announced and rumored candidacies shared by USUN with Washington, Salguiero listed Tanzania as a candidate country. End Note.) He said, however, that Mauritius had not been expected to announce its candidacy, and it was unclear whether Mauritius would drop out in favor of another country to allow for a clean African slate. He also noted that for the North African sub-region, it was possible that either Algeria or Morocco would step down to allow Egypt to run for the Council on a clean slate.

AMBASSADOR BOLTON RAISES IRAN

14. (C) Ambassador Bolton raised Iran with Salguiero, expressing concern with Iran's April 11 announcement that it had attained a higher level of enrichment capability. Noting that the IAEA's El Baradei will be arriving in Tehran

shortly, the Ambassador said Iran's announcement demonstrates that Iran is not paying attention to the Security Council statement, and he said that after El Baradei reports to the Council on April 28, the United States will look at the possibility of a Chapter 7 resolution in the Council. He requested European support, both in the Council and in helping with others, and asked if Salguiero could provide more information on European discussions this week regarding possible steps. Salguiero said the EU General Affairs Council had met on Monday and Tuesday, but he did not have (or had not seen) any report on the issue of Iran. He said he would try to obtain a report of the meeting and share this with Ambassador Bolton.

BOLTON